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VIIEWS SHIFT ON VIET WAR

U.S. Adviser Offers New Approach To Winning

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[Sun Staff Correspondent]

Saigon, Sept. 8—One of the big blocks in American thinking about fighting what the Communists call "wars of liberation" used to be the belief that they could be won with enough men and better firepower.

It has now been recognized that it takes a strong combined effort in the military, economic and political fields. Still, Americans tend to be very fuzzy in the "how to do it" side when it comes to playing politics away from their own frontiers.

One of the men responsible for changing the thinking habits of Americans about combating large-scale Communist subversion is Edward G. Lansdale, a retired Air Force major general.

Thwarted Uprising

He helped deflate the Communist uprising in the Philippines and as an adviser to the late Ngo Dinh Diem had that regime moving well until Diem isolated himself and began listening only to his eccentric mandarin kin.

Lansdale is back in Vietnam. He arrived on a tide of publicity to be an adviser to United States Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. Lodge has always been strong on the political side of the war here but even he has had trouble focusing a "how to do it" program in this complicated and factionalized nation. Lansdale is expected to spell this out.

In Liaison Group

Formally, Lansdale has been made the chairman of the United States Mission Liaison Group to the Secretary-General of the Central Rural Construction Council. It is a long and fancy name but it is a high-powered committee presided over by the Prime Minister, Air Vice Marshall Nguyen Cao Ky. It includes all the right power men within the Vietnamese Government.

The group was established only weeks ago to fan the fluttering flame of the pacification program.

In the countryside,

It will take time for Lansdale to come up with his specific plans for submission to the Vietnamese. He is busy getting together a staff. And he feels the yards of publicity has amounted to unhelpful "overexposure" so he is trying to be obscure.

His ideas are not obscure and are well worth considering.

Lansdale spelled them out last fall in an article in the quarterly review, *Foreign Affairs*.

He reminds us that the Communists have at their political base both an idea and an organization although both their concepts are foreign to the Vietnamese.

Americans, have poured in money, men, equipment and technical advice. Yet, it has not worked. The reaction, Lansdale argues, has fallen into three categories. One, disengage. Two, use stepped-up military force to crush Hanoi. Three, continue in the old way with increased vigor.

Choice Urged

"The anomaly in these reactions and beliefs is that each falls short of understanding that the Communists have let loose a revolutionary idea in Vietnam and that it will not die by being ignored, bombed or smothered by us," says Lansdale. "Ideas do not die in such ways."

Thus, Lansdale, holds that the United States must "oppose the Communist idea with a better idea and do so right on the battlefield itself, in a way that would permit the people, who are the main feature of that battleground, to make their own choice."

This is admittedly easier said than done. And what Lansdale suggests is sketched out in general terms.

Principles Of Freedom

"A political base," he wrote, "would be established, consisting of a statement of political goals founded upon principles most cherished by free men, which Vietnamese share, and the aggressive commitment of the organizations and resources on our side to start the Vietnamese moving towards those political goals realistically."

When political leaders, such that exist, are at each others throats, and religious leaders are moribundly suspicious of any advantage the other may gain, the task is a big one.